DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 301 188 IR 013 528

AUTHOR McIsaac, Marina Stock; And Others
TITLE Video Education Centers To Meet Student Needs in Turkish Distance Education Programs.
PUB DATE 16 Jan 88
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (New Orleans, LA, January 16-21, 1988).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Developing Nations; *Distance Education; Educational Television; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *Instructional Effectiveness; Media Research; *Pilot Projects; Questionnaires; Student Attitudes; *Videotape Recordings
IDENTIFIERS *Anadolu University (Turkey)

ABSTRACT

Two pilot projects undertaken in 1987 by the Open Education Faculty (OEF) of Anadolu University (Eskisehir, Turkey) were designed to determine whether distance education students would benefit from watching videotapes of the educational programs if they were made available at Video Education Centers. A project conducted in Konya, Turkey, was intended to discover whether Video Education Centers could be absorbed into the normal activities of OEF bureaus, using video English lessons that had already been prepared by the faculty for broadcast television. Students who took part in the project recommended that an instructor be included in future video projects, suggesting that they would rather have a directed program with an instructor present than a self-paced individualized course of instruction. A second pilot project undertaken at the OEF Bureau in Denizli sought to determine whether viewing videotapes of televised instruction would improve student performance. Instruction involved English video lessons providing the primary information and a teacher to amplify selected instruction only. Results of student pre- and posttests and student questionnaires are currently being analyzed to evaluate the project. Future plans include the establishment of Video Education Centers in at least five other Turkish cities. A map showing the location of the 19 OEF bureaus is attached. (7 references, 6 in Turkish and 1 in English). (EW)

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VIDEO EDUCATION CENTERS TO MEET STUDENT NEEDS IN TURKISH DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Dr. Marina Stock McIsaac
Educational Media & Computers
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona

Karen L. Murphy
Open Education Faculty
Anadolu University
Eskişehir, Turkey

Dr. Uğur Demiray and Dr. Murat Barkan
Open Education Faculty
Anadolu University
Eskişehir, Turkey

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Paper prepared for the Annual Conference of the International Division, Association for Educational Communications and Technology, New Orleans, LA., January 16, 1988.

IR013528

Anadolu University, in Turkey, has over 150,000 students enrolled in a nationwide Distance Education Program. The university is in Eskişehir, a city of approximately 500,000 located in Western Anatolia between Ankara and Istanbul. The university is not presently a distance teaching university, but it is a university with a distance teaching department referred to as the Open Education Faculty, or OEF. This innovative distance teaching program has been described in detail at a previous conference of AECT, as well as at meetings of the International Visual Literacy Association. A complete discussion of the program is forthcoming in the Spring, 1988 issue of the journal DISTANCE EDUCATION. Although the program has been remarkably successful, the administration at Anadolu University continues to seek new ways to solve educational problems inherent in such a massive undertaking.

BACKGROUND. One of the greatest problems confronting educators in Turkey is how to provide thousands of students with education at a distance by utilizing limited personnel and financial resources. A solution is to use existing technologies such as television to supplement the primary medium of instruction, printed material. There are more than 200 regular supplementary television and radio broadcasts per year. These television programs are aired over the one government operated television channel which is broadcast throughout Turkey. There is a second channel which is not available for

educational programming and presently serves only the principal cities. Students generally watch these television courses at home.

In addition to printed materials and television programs, an important component of instruction is provided by Academic Service Centers. These centers, located on university campuses in twenty-four cities in Turkey and Northern Cyprus, provide face-to-face lectures at the end of the day, usually from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. to supplement the printed materials and television programs for students enrolled in open education courses. Students who would like to ask questions or hear supplementary lectures are encouraged to attend academic service centers where a university lecturer is available to help them. Approximately 80% of the students enrolled in open education courses make use of these academic service centers. It is planned to have such service centers in as many of the 67 provinces in Turkey as possible.

NEED FOR VIDEO EDUCATION CENTERS. A major and current problem is the difficulty students have in watching educational television programs which are broadcast only once. In an effort to determine whether students would benefit from watching videotapes of the educational programs if they were made available at Video Education Centers, two pilot projects have been undertaken in the past year. These projects assess the need for supplemental videotape services at the existing OEF bureaus, which are the local administrative offices. The current level of TV broadcasting of OEF instructional programs may be insufficient for Turkish Distance Education even though daily TV broadcasts provide instruction for eight of the nine courses now required by OEF students each year. Television reception is widely available today in Turkey, throughout approximately 98 percent of the country. Ninety-two percent of the OEF students indicate that they follow the television programs

at least some of the time. In previous years the programs were broadcast at 5:00 pm in the evenings during weekdays, at a time that the majority of students were still at work and therefore were unable to watch the programs. Now, however, the 20-minute TV programs are broadcast on weekdays from 6:30 or 7:00 to 8:00 am, and on weekends from 8:00 to 10:00 am. Conversations with a small number of students living in Eskişehir indicate that they find the weekday broadcast hours too early for convenient viewing. Furthermore, each lesson is generally broadcast only once per year. Therefore students are unable to watch a TV lesson if they missed the normal broadcast time. As a result, OEF students have had no control over the timing or pacing of this element of their instruction. Although the video education center projects do not currently address the issue of independent study, or the effectiveness of videotapes used individually by students to complete a course at their own pace, that appears to be an area for further study.

PILOT VIDEO EDUCATION CENTER PROJECTS. The large scale Video Education Center project which is underway is anticipated to affect a number of Turkey's nineteen OEF bureaus throughout the country. The purpose of the bureaus which contain Video Education Centers will be to provide increased support services to OEF students. It is generally expected that OEF students will continue to derive the bulk of their learning (approximately 65%) from printed materials, 15% from the evening face-to-face lessons, 10% from television instruction, and 10% from other activities. Since the beginning of the OEF six years ago, improvements have been made in a number of instructional and administrative areas. The Video Education Centers propose yet another alternative to provide supplementary educational services to students in various parts of the country. As a result, pilot Video Education Center projects have

already been completed in two of the OEF bureaus in Turkey. The two pilot centers are located in Konya and Denizli.

PILOT PROGRAM 1. A pilot project in Konya was completed during Spring, 1987 (May 18 to June 1, 1987) to discover whether or not Video Education Centers could be absorbed into the normal activities of OEF bureaus. In this project a staff person showed the video English lessons, which had already been prepared by the faculty for broadcast television. These lessons are based on the British series "Follow Me." Students learned about the Video Education pilot program in Konya through the regional press and through notices posted at the bureau. Three groups of 15 students each were formed, meeting for approximately 1 hour per day for 12 days at the Konya Bureau.

These groups were composed of first, second, third, and fourth year OEF students. A midday class was even arranged for the convenience of the students who work full time. During the first ten days videos were shown for Units 1-30 (which is equivalent to the first year English language course), and then all the video programs were repeated during the final two days. Because of time constraints, however, it was not possible for the students to have repeated showings of the videos during their individual sessions.

As a result of this project, it was determined that indeed Video Education Centers could be absorbed into the normal functions of the OEF bureaus. At the end of the project, the director of the Konya bureau asked the students to write their suggestions on how to improve the service. Approximately 90% of the students in the Konya project recommended that an instructor be included in future video projects. These recommendations may suggest that students are asking for a directed program including an instructor rather than a self-paced individualized course of instruction.

PILOT PROGRAM 2. The second study was done at the OEF Bureau in Denizli from November 16 to December 23, 1987. The purpose of this project was to determine whether viewing videotapes of televised instruction might improve the performance of OEF students. Based upon the recommendations of the students in the Konya project, a teacher was chosen to participate in this second project. The teacher who was selected is considered one of the best teachers from the Denizli Anadolu High School (the Anadolu high schools provide most of their instruction in English). The project was designed in the following manner: the English video lessons provided the primary information and examples, and the teacher was instrumental in amplifying selected information only.

Announcement of the new Video Education Center in Denizli was made through the regional newspaper, through posters at the bureau, and this time additionally through individual letters sent to each student living in Denizli who had failed the first year OEF English course during the 1986-87 academic year. The first 20 students who applied and who met these qualifications were accepted for the Video Education Center program. Five females and 15 males participated in this five-week program. Half of the students in this program had regular jobs while studying. These students attended the video class in the Denizli OEF Bureau five days a week for two and one half hours each day, from 4:00 to 6:30 pm. The Friday lessons consisted of a repetition of all of the week's programs. At the beginning of the project, the students were given a pre-test of 100 questions to determine their level of English. The students were asked to read an article on audio tape to demonstrate their pronunciation level. In addition, they wrote a short biography which included their birthdate and place, where they worked, and certain family information.

The Denizli group covered 30 units (all of the first year's lessons) in five weeks. The teacher's role was to use the prepared OEF video lessons as the primary form of instruction. When important points were presented in the video or students did not understand a certain concept, the teacher either used video freeze frame, or repeated portions of the video to provide information or elicit responses from the class. The teacher assessed the level of the students' understanding as in other face-to-face situations, i.e., from verbal responses and from nonverbal behavior. During each session students completed either one or two units, depending on the situation and the length of each lesson. The instructor was also able to evaluate the students' progress on a daily basis from the ten question pre- and post-unit tests given on each unit. At the end of the project in Denizli, a post-test was given to each student. Results of the pre- and post-tests are being analyzed currently to determine the effectiveness of the video instruction. A questionnaire will also be given to the students. This questionnaire will elicit a student profile, will ask students' opinions on the process of video instruction, and will ask for their suggestions on how to improve this form of instruction. Since these students in Denizli had all failed their first year of English, they intend to take the English midterm and final examinations along with the current first-year OEF students (these exams will be given in March and June, respectively).

FUTURE PLANS. It is planned that several more Video Education Centers will be established during 1988, in addition to offering video classes again at the Konya and Denizli OEF bureaus. Video Education classes are either currently being held or are in the planning stages in five other cities, each of which has its own particular characteristics. Denizli is unique in that it is the only city with an OEF bureau and no university, so face-to-face instruction is not

normally possible there. Trabzon and Samsun, on the other hand, are located quite far from the administrative center in Eskisehir, and therefore will have to exercise far more local control than Konya and Denizli, which are nearer to Eskisehir. Istanbul, which is the largest city, and Izmir where a large OEF student population is found, both have their unique approaches to this form of instruction. Finally, Erzurum, which is the coldest city of Turkey, has its own special geographic problems and has been made responsible for establishing its own center.

The fees that students pay for this service are quite moderate, particularly in comparison with other places which provide similar kinds of lessons. People attending other language courses must pay from four to six times the amount that OEF students pay for their video English courses.

Each new Video Education Center will incorporate some of the suggestions made by students and staff involved in earlier projects. For example, changes may be made in the pacing of instruction, the length of time given for each group to complete their instruction, the number of groups which will be formed in the various bureaus, and the kinds of students who will participate in the sessions. In addition, lessons other than foreign languages may be offered. Program changes will depend upon various factors such as geographic conditions, teacher availability, and the situation at the bureaus. As the Video Education Center project is still in the pilot stage, decisions are being made on a daily basis. Future applications of this concept will be based on past and present experiences.

Through the use of available technologies such as videotapes to assist local instructors at individual bureaus, effective instruction can be delivered to smaller groups of students in outlying areas. Video stores can be seen even in small sized towns and videocassettes are easily available. More and more

people today own television sets and even videoplayers. If these Video Education Center projects prove successful for group instruction, perhaps videotapes can also be used as instructional materials for individual use. Such use of technology would contribute significantly to students' control over the timing and pacing of their own instruction.

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1987-88